

**FRIENDSHIP FARMS & FARE**  
FARM REPORT & NEWSLETTER  
OCTOBER 6, 2014 – 1ST 2014-2015 FARM & CSA REPORT

**REPORT**

**74 degrees at 4:30 AM, October 4, 2014**

**Historical Average (for 10/3): 87 HIGH, 72 LOW–Weather Underground:**

<http://www.wunderground.com/>

The historical average high temperature is now 87 degrees (seventeen degrees higher than the lowest average high [70]). Our average low is now 72 degrees (twenty-one degrees higher than the lowest average low [51]). The average high and average low are in their annual decline, which will continue through the fall, and then begin a gradual ascent in the early winter (late January).

**Note:** For the past few years, our summer and fall highs and lows have typically run a bit higher than historic averages. Thus far this year, the trend has continued. The higher temperatures stress even hot-weather summer crops. Our development of seed stock from plants grown in these above normal temperatures may result in plants more tolerant of the increasingly harsh climate.

**Welcome to a New Garden Year**  
**Our 5th**

This missive marks the beginning of our 2014-2015 Garden Year. This is the fifth year of the Friendship Farms & Fare CSA, and we are happy to report that we had an excellent renewal rate, and added new members.

Thanks to everyone who has renewed. Your support is empowering and encouraging. If you have any questions, send us a message, and we'll answer or clarify.

So far, we have received eight renewals, and two new shares. There is one share from last year that has not contacted us about renewing for 2014-2015. We are still aiming to have 12 shares in the coming year, which is about what we'd need to break even.

As most of you know, shares will be relatively light in early October. We are expecting significant quantities of sweet potatoes (and leaves), and of course plenty of herbs. We will have arugula and possibly the first small collard leaves. Okra and eggplant will be very light. See the Share Report for all items.

Contributions to Friendship Farms & Fare are now tax-deductable. If you would like to offer financial support, your contributions will be a wonderful enhancement to our project – and they will be tax deductible.

**Weekly Weather Report**  
**Stalled Front and Tropical Moisture Bring Wet Conditions**

**Last Week (9/27-10/3):** Rain and overcast conditions again dominated weather last week. We had rain four days and generally overcast conditions. Even with the rain and overcast, temperatures were above normal four days and near normal for the other three. Our highest temperature was 90, which we reached twice, and our lowest high was 86 on an overcast day.

We again had a considerable amount of rain – a little over 3 inches. These past three weeks have brought the most rain we have had since the start of the summer rainy season – over 8 inches total. Rain is always welcome, especially after our dry summer, although the above normal quantities are causing flooding in some parts of the watershed.

Despite our high rainfall these past three past week, 2014 will be a very dry year for the Springs Coast Watershed – at least the Friendship Farms & Fare locations. We'll give a final report on summer rains shortly. By the end of September, 2013 we had over 50 inches for the year. This year, our total rainfall was about 40 inches. We caught up quite a bit in September.

**This Week (10/4-10/10):** WU is forecasting the first cold front of the season this week. Highs and lows will both be a bit below average every day. There will also be less humidity, which will enhance the cooling effect. The latter part of the week will see a gradual warming trend.

Gardeners and farmers in the area may have to irrigate most days.

**Looking Ahead:** The wet conditions of the past few weeks have been something of an anomaly, and farmers and gardeners should be aware of approaching the dry season. We will get a good dose of that after the front passes.

During the summer months, we average a quarter of an inch of rain a day. By mid-October we will be down to an average of .06 of an inch. Very soon, rain will be scarce.

Temperatures will continue to drop. By the end of October, historical average highs will be 81 degrees and lows will be in the mid-60s. Historically, the first cool front of the season reaches central Florida in the latter part of September. That was not be the case this year. We thought the first one would reach us next week. We are happy to have been wrong on that, and welcome the cooler temperatures this week.

### **Garden Overview**

**(additional details and assessments follows)**

We are in a transitional period, and harvests are light. Our friend, Rose at Market Off Main, reports that none of her vegetables are coming from Florida yet. Most are still coming from California. This is no surprise. September and October are transitional months in Florida, when summer crops cease producing and fall crops are not yet mature.

Just as with the big growers, our summer crops are largely spent and the fall crops are just getting started. It will be weeks before big harvests start coming in. In addition, we had a real set back with the unseasonable rains of the past few weeks.

Okra is declining quickly now, and the harvest is shrinking dramatically. We are still harvesting, however. Seed pods are gigantic, and we harvested more of those for next year's seeds. Sweet potatoes are still being harvested, and the leaves are still good. We noticed a few small eggplant fruit this week, and we might have some for shares. We harvested a little okra yesterday, and we'll dig more sweet potatoes Sunday.

Rain is always welcome, but as we enter the seeding and planting season, heavy rains and overcast conditions become problematic, drowning seeds and seedlings, inhibiting root and leaf formation, and generally weakening young plants. This has happened here at our nursery. We lost about 90% of our seedlings, and will have to start more in the coming week.

We did relatively little seeding this week.

### **Fall Planning and First Plantings**

Our early planting has been largely unsuccessful. As recommend by the Florida Department of Agriculture, and various commercial planting guides, we planted fall and winter crops at the recommended time. However, rather than the cooling and drying conditions we should have had,

we continued to experience full-on summer weather patterns – heat, humidity, and heavy rains. The new climate-change weather renders current planting calendars obsolete. We need new and revised planting guides that take into account climate change.

We again took a break from fall seeding this week due to the persistent rains and overly damp conditions. We will again postpone our initial fall plantings another week at least (to 10/13), with hopes that we'll have healthier seedlings. Once again this past week, young plants were washed out in the rains. Swiss chard did a little better this week, and some of the plants we have in the ground are showing signs of healthy development. It is still early, however. Our collards are making the best progress, and we have a number of healthy little plants. For full details on this week's plantings, see the seeding and planting summary later in the Farm Report.

The first plants into the garden will be kales, collards, and broccoli. We will definitely plant arugula, whose seeds have generated with enthusiasm.

In recent years, September and even October have been too hot for the cool weather crops to develop. Nonetheless, we will continue our seed starting and garden transplants, and continue to hope that temperatures and precipitation get closer to their historical norms. The coming week will be very helpful in this regard.

This fall we are going heavier on the cool-weather greens than we have in the past – collards, kale, and swiss chard. Our new experimental crop this fall is spinach. Of course, we'll have a healthy planting of arugula, and the famous Calabrese. Bell peppers will be planted in October, and we expect our habaneros to continue their irrepressible ways. We'll forego cauliflower, and go heavy on broccoli. Tomatoes will be testers only, and only in set asides in the South Garden. Septoria has just been too hard on our tomatoes in previous years. For all plantings, we'll use seeds from our collection or heirloom seeds from Seed Savers Exchange (<http://www.seedsavers.org/>).

### **Summer Wrap Up**

As noted above, the summer farming season is coming to an end. Okra harvests are shrinking each week, and will continue to diminish. The plants themselves are perishing. The last major sweet potato harvest will be this weekend.

It continues to amaze how well the plants know their seasons and their life-spans. If only we knew our life and purpose as well as these generous plants who have sustained us since we first made them our companions 10,000 years ago.

### **Blackberries Ouachita Family**

The blackberry grove in the southeast corner of the south garden is coming along nicely. Christine Grovenstein of Seeds of Love Organic Farm lovingly shared these Ouachita Blackberries with us. Seeds of Love specializes in blueberries, but they also have a nice grove of blackberries. We are most appreciative to the generosity of Seeds of Love. We'll try to share images of our grove in future mailings.

### **Habanero Peppers**

Habanero peppers continue to thrive. We have four habanero shrubs, and always have dozens of fruit ready to harvest.

**If anyone has a relationship with a restaurant whose chefs want to use a local organic searing-hot pepper, we'll be happy to supply for a reasonable contribution -- \$1.00 per pepper.**

## **Hart's Family Hot Sauce Ready for the Willing**

Ray (of Hart's Family Gardens) has brewed this season's first batch of habanero pepper sauce. We sampled it, and found it quite tasty, but HOT. Use in moderation. The sauce is made with various peppers (chiefly habaneros) organic vodka, and apple cider vinegar. That's it! It is all organic, with only local peppers. It may be too hot for some palate. All peppers are from Hart's Family Gardens or Friendship Farms & Fare.

If you would like to try a bottle, just let us know. A donation of \$5.00 will be received for a 5oz. bottle.

## **Bell Peppers**

Bell peppers will be unlikely this week.

## **Tomatoes**

We'll try a few tomato varieties this fall, but increasingly it looks like peppers are a more reliable crop. Here is a YouTube video from a avid video gardeners with 10 reasons why he suggests focusing on peppers rather than tomatoes: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_3rRf32IGLY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_3rRf32IGLY)

## **Eggplant**

We are listing eggplant again this week, and some plants are setting fruit. There are abundant flowers on all the plants (more than at anytime during the summer), but many of the flowers are not maturing into fruit. There will be some small ones this week, and fruits shared by our friends at Cadle's Cove Farm may augment our production. Include in your share request if you like, but we cannot guarantee supply.

The Florida High Bush variety is living up to its name. Several plants are over six feet tall, and a couple are close to seven. They are producing prodigious amounts of flowers, more than they have all year, but the flowers are not transitioning to fruit. Sources we consulted indicate that this is likely due to heat, humidity, or excessive moisture.

See archives for April 7, for detailed account of eggplant varieties and cultures of origin. [http://media.wix.com/ugd/643592\\_6fd736191eff46a8bf7c91e04bd5c78f.pdf](http://media.wix.com/ugd/643592_6fd736191eff46a8bf7c91e04bd5c78f.pdf)

Most likely, we'll try eggplant again next year, but the tantalizing profusion of flowers that do not transition to fruit is discouraging.

## **Purslane**

Purslane continues to thrive, although it has passed its warm weather prime. There is plenty available.

## **Viticulture (Grape) News**

All vines have been cut back to primary stems. Most are putting forth new leaves. We'll monitor for the dreaded skeletonizers, although their season as passed.

## **Pre-Season Loquat Budding Exciting News About Two Young Trees**

As first noted four weeks ago, our loquat trees have early buds, including our young trees (less than three years old), which were grown from seeds of our existing trees. There are more buds on the trees this year than we've ever seen before, and now some of the buds have formed flowers.

The buds are still abundant, but there is no sign of maturation into fruit. We remain attentive.

Joining the two young trees is now a third. These trees are a long way from producing fruit, but this budding is occurring at the same time as the pre-seasonal budding of all the local trees that regularly produce fruit in season. It remains to be seen if the young trees will produce fruit, but if they do, they will be true champions, sharing their first harvest two full years earlier than the earliest possible date given in the literature. This will definitely be something to celebrate – and publicize!

### **Okra**

As noted previously, harvests continue to decrease. Gradually, the plants are perishing, and there are fewer each week that are very strong and vigorous.

This past week we harvested  $2\frac{3}{4}$  pounds, bringing our total for the season to **95 $\frac{1}{2}$**  lbs., total. Last year we harvested a total of 31 pounds. We have adjusted our target upward (from 50 pounds) to 100 pounds this year. It now appears that we will probably just miss the target. Still, this is an impressive harvest.

Harvests have dropped off dramatically. We'll make special note of the last harvest of the season. The first, by the way, was June 1 – a Hill Country Red. So, we can safely note that okra produces for four solid months (June 1 to October 1).

Most likely, we'll have okra through the third week of October, although this is not certain.

Also, as a reminder, all of our plants are grown using seeds from the 3F seed bank, saved from previous years. So, these are closed loop, sustainable seeds and plants.

### **Sweet Potatoes Harvest Continues**

We harvested **17  $\frac{1}{2}$**  lbs of sweet potatoes this week – in a steady rain. The total harvest is now **181** lbs.

Shares can expect sweet potatoes this week. We finished harvesting one of the Old North beds. We have four more beds to harvest.

The Old North beds are all regeneration plants; that is, plants sprouted from roots and missed fruit from last year. Many were coming up in the north beds, so we collected regeneration plants from other beds and transplanted them to there. The fruits from the first Old North were beautiful, and free of all blemishes. Hopefully, those in the remaining beds will be as good.

Sweet potatoes are by far the most labor-intensive crop to harvest, surpassing even creating new beds in energy expenditure, physical exertion, and demands on stamina.

Last year, we harvested 150 lbs of SPs. This year, we are aiming at 250 lbs. We will probably come close to that. It all depends on the yield from the remaining four beds, which are the largest on the farm.

Some recently harvested SPs may be a bit rugged in appearance now, with clefts and splits. due to excessive moisture and ground-dwelling fauna, most likely grubs, and beetles. Many shares who have enjoyed SPs in previous years are familiar with the appearance of these fruits, which would be "seconds" or "thirds" by commercial standards. You'd never see them in the stores.

Working with these seconds and thirds is not difficult: cut off the damaged skin, then bake the "naked" taters, whole, or slice the fruit into thin wafers or coins. Perfect and delicious! We need to make a video or slide show of how this works. It is really quite easy, and saves a large number of potatoes.

Please let us know if you'll accept these special fruits. We also have plenty of good "bakers" (well-formed and blemish free) so don't hesitate to request them. The "bakers" are usually smaller than the seconds.

Using the additional beds of the New South Gardens, we started earlier this year and staggered the planting of slips over two months. This allows for earlier harvests and also extends the harvest over an extended period – from early July through early September. We'll see how that works out, but so far the spuds are maturing on schedule.

We planted 300 slips in our two gardens, and added another 50 or slips of our own. We acquire our slips from George's Plant Farm in Martin, Tennessee. George's is a family farm, with a wonderful story. To learn about the Dellinger Family and their farm, here is a link to their website: <http://www.tatorman.com/>

### **Sweet Potato Leaves**

SP leaves are still available in quantity, and will be for the rest of the garden year, but the end draws nigh. Once they are gone, we will have no more until next late next spring. The leaves taste like dark leafy vegetables (spinach, kale, collards), but with a slight sweetness. They are a wonderful replacement for fresh greens, which are usually difficult to find locally from sustainable organic farms in the summer.

Well, they are fresh greens! They have a multitude of uses: fresh (in salads or as a side), in soups, in omelets, sautéed, baked, or microwaved (if you use that technology) -- and as an exciting addition to pasta sauce.

Please note, due to processing and transportation systems, at this time of the year, the SP leaves may experience some wilting. Fresh harvest is best. Most leaves in a share will be just fine, but some will probably wilt.

### **Cat Briar (Smilax)**

Smilax is still producing, but it is slowing down now. Some in the CSA community have enjoyed this wild, native-Florida specialty, and repeated share requests every week.

See earlier Farm Report for an extended narrative about Smilax.

### **Eggs Now Available Suncoast Acres Poultry Farm**

We have found a local fowl and egg farm, and acquired our first share of eggs. Initial reports on the eggs are positive, and we are making arrangements with the farm for a regular supply. All indications are that the farm family we have met looks after their animals with interest and care.

The farm is called "Suncoast Acres Poultry Farm," in Spring Hill, just south of the Hernando County line. Be advised, the family raises chickens, ducks, turkeys, and rabbits for human consumption. In addition to chicken eggs, they also have duck and turkey eggs.

If you would like to sample duck or turkey eggs, let us know.

The cost for these eggs will be slightly higher than our previous costs, but they are coming from a local farm, which treats their animals with compassion.

Starting next Garden year, prices will be \$6.50 a dozen (\$5.00 for shares), and \$4.00 a half-dozen (\$3.00 for shares). These prices are a bit higher than prices for organic eggs at commercial grocers. Acquiring eggs from a local farm (Suncoast Acres Poultry Farm) keeps resources in our community, supports local farming, and directly benefits a local farm family.

Let us know if you would like to tour Suncoast Acres Poultry Farm. We are planning to take a tour, and would welcome any shareholders who would like to join the tour.

**Honey:** Local honey is again available. Our bee husbander, Robert, has just brought in an ample honey harvest. We support Robert's work, which is as much about sustaining and regenerating bee populations as it is about honey distribution. Robert's bees live in West Pasco County, near New Port Richey, they pollinate wild flowers, domestic fruit trees, and vegetables. Honey is available in 8 oz. bottles for \$7.00 a bottle, \$5.50 for CSA Shares.

We have found a local humane fowl and egg farm, and acquired our first share of eggs. First reports on the eggs are positive, and we are making arrangements with the farm for a regular supply. All indications are that the farm family we have met looks after their animals with interest and care.

The farm is called "Suncoast Acres Poultry Farm." Be advised, the family raises chickens, ducks, turkeys, and rabbits for human consumption. In addition to chicken eggs, they also have duck and turkey eggs.

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**Herbs:** Tarragon is thriving, along with rosemary. We also have four Basils (Lemon, Cinnamon, Globe, and Italian). Consult the share list for other herbs, and other available items.

**Tampa deliveries will be Thursday this week.** West Pasco deliveries will be determined on the basis of share request and distance, no later than Tuesday morning.

Shareholders can call your farmer directly. If you are not a shareholder, and would like to schedule a visit to the gardens or to acquire seeds, seedlings, plants, or produce, please use the address on the website to contact us. <http://www.ffffsite.org/#!contact/cl4l>

**For this week, here is what we have** (FCFS, as always):

### **THE SHARE**

**October 6, 2014 (1)**

**\* larger quantity available if desired**

**FCFS = limited supplies, early submissions given preference**

**Tampa Transmissions TBA**

### **Vegetables**

**Arugula (small quantities)**

**Bell Peppers (possible) small-medium (FCFS)**

**Eggplant (small) (possible) (FCFS)**  
**Okra (small quantities)**  
**Peppers – Habanero\* – very hot**  
**Smilax (Cat Briar) (small quantity) (FCFS)**  
**Sweet Potatoes**  
**Sweet Potato Leaves**

**Fruit - none this week**

**Fungus/Mushrooms –**  
**Shitake Mushrooms – possible (from Cadle's Cove)**

**Nuts – none this week**

**Roots – none this week**

**Herbs (\* larger quantity available if desired)**

**Basil – Lemon**  
**Basil – Cinnamon**  
**Basil – Italian**  
**Basil – Globe**  
**Basil – medley (mix of all basil)**  
**Chives**  
**Cilantro**  
**Oregano**  
**Parsley**  
**Purslane**  
**Rosemary\***  
**Tarragon\***  
**Thyme**

#### **COMPANION FAUNA**

**Bat update:** No bats at the lodge this week. None overhead at twilight.

**Leopard Frogs:** None observed, but song was heard most nights.

**Earth Worms:** Significant numbers of earthworms (the most ever) encountered during SP harvest. These are not the "Red Wigglers" (manure worms) that are used in composting, but the deep earth-burrowing creatures, that are so helpful to gardens. From time to time over the years, we have found earthworms during harvesting and planting seasons, but we have never found so many in one location at the same time. This is a wonderful sign of the health of our soil.

**Sphinx Moth:** No sphinx this week. Here is Youtube video of a Sphinx Moth feeding at 4 o'clocks, very much like the moth at the 3F farm. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eaTfKLO96gE>

**Pygmy Rattlesnake:** No pygmy rattler this week. Here is a good site on the pygmy rattlesnake from the University of Florida: <http://ufwildlife.ifas.ufl.edu/pdfs/Pygmy%20Rattlesnake%20Info%20Sheet.pdf>

**Grapeleaf Skeletonizer:** No GS caterpillars observed on leaves of one vine. See report in [Viticulture \(Grape News\)](#) section. Here is a link to a site with good information and images of the Skeletonizer: [http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/fruit/grapeleaf\\_skeletonizer.htm](http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/fruit/grapeleaf_skeletonizer.htm)

**Southern Toad:** Two toads observed during SP harvest in pouring rain

**Lubbers:** No lubbers this week. This will be our last report on lubbers this year. Hopefully, these native Florida grasshoppers will return next year. We will call the summer of 2014 "The One Lubber Summer." It is possible that poisons being used locally have led to the disappearance of the lubbers, although the use of poisons outside local dwellings has not been observed.

**Swifts:** None observed, although the lodge is again busy with sounds of life.

**Tree Frogs:** Abundant and busy. More egg clutches, and tadpoles.

**Greenhouse Frog:** This fall and winter friend is now appearing regularly. Several observed in the main nursery area and in planters in the south garden

**Nocturnal Garden Spider** – Many in both gardens.

**Sweet bees:** None.

**"Asian Tramp Snail."** The snails are uncommon now. Only a few were observed. It is likely that their heavy season is the Spring. We will continue to monitor these creatures.

**Mediterranean Gecko:** One observed most evenings this week. Here is a good site for the Mediterranean Gecko, and Florida fauna in general:  
<http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/nonnatives/reptiles/mediterranean-gecko/>

**Southern Ringneck Snake:** Not observed this week. Here is a site on the Southern Ringneck Snake from the Florida Museum of Natural History and the University of Florida:  
<https://www.flmnh.ufl.edu/herpetology/fl-guide/Diadophispunctatus.htm>

**Marine Toad (aka: Brazilian Cane Toad, *Rhinella marina*, Giant Toad):** None observed. Good.

Marine Toads are destructive of ecosystems and poisonous to mammals. They are omnivorous, aggressive, and drive out native and assimilated frogs and toads. A survey of several professional sites found none that recommended killing the frogs, although this has been advocated by several folks in the area.

Here is the Extension Office's website on the Marine Toad (which includes an audio of its call):  
[http://www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife\\_info/frogstoads/rhinella\\_marina.php](http://www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/wildlife_info/frogstoads/rhinella_marina.php)

Here is a very detailed, professional study of the Marine Toad, also from the Extension Office. This site has instructions for humane euthanizing of the creatures:  
[http://www.egovlink.com/public\\_documents300/winterhaven/published\\_documents/Winter%20Haven/Lakes/Backyard%20Wildlife/Animal%20Information/Frogs%20and%20Toads/Marine%20Toads%20UW04600.pdf](http://www.egovlink.com/public_documents300/winterhaven/published_documents/Winter%20Haven/Lakes/Backyard%20Wildlife/Animal%20Information/Frogs%20and%20Toads/Marine%20Toads%20UW04600.pdf)

**Florida Black Snake:** Not observed.

**Woodlouse** – A few in various locations.

**Honey Bees:** No honey bees observed this week. This is a bit disappointing, and somewhat concerning. One of their favorite treats is loquat blossoms – and we have an abundance of those. We continue to expect to see these helpful creatures on the loquat flowers, which they love.

**Raccoon:** No raccoon activity this week.

**Opossum:** None observed. Observers were absent for the week.

**Tomato Pinworm:** None observed. The season for these eggplant-loving moth larvae may have passed.

For information on pinworms, see this University of Florida site:  
[http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/veg/tomato/tomato\\_pinworm.htm](http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/veg/tomato/tomato_pinworm.htm)

**Cats:** Neighborhood cat, Frankie, appears regularly. She has a kind disposition and has lived in the neighborhood for nearly a decade.

## **3F Stories, Events, and Policy Updates**

### **Planting & Harvest Notes Start of Fall Seeding**

**Seedings:** none – rained out

**Garden Starts:** none – rained out

**Harvest Notes:** okra, sweet potatoes, herbs, arugula, bell peppers, eggplant

**Vermipost:** no harvest

**Bat Guano:** no harvest (no bats)

### **Next Workday: TBA**

If you would like to join us for a fall workday, we'll have a lot to do. Please send your best Saturday(s) in October.

## **Nursery Certification and Registration Friendship Farms & Fare 48015239**

Friendship Farms & Fare is a registered nursery in the state of Florida. Our registration number is 48015239.

In accord with state regulations, our nursery was inspected in April. Mr. Daniel Merced from the Florida Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Plant & Apiary Inspection conducted the review.

Mr. Merced gave the nursery a very positive evaluation, and recommended the 3F Nursery for certification and registration. We have now received the official documentation. While with us, Mr. Merced also inspected our groves, and offered extremely helpful insights into citrus growing, and the conditions of our trees. Interestingly, Merced discovered Asian Citrus Psyllids on every citrus tree in our grove – that's the transporter of Citrus Greening. More interesting, perhaps, he

detected no Greening in any of the young trees planted in the New South Grove in January, 2013. Your Farmer (now technically and officially a "Nurseryman") learned a great deal about identifying specific challenges citrus trees may face and treatments for these challenges.

Our successful pursuit of certification and registration is another step in the development of the Friendship Farms and Fare sustainable urban agriculture project. As most of you know, we are already a registered seed seller. The nursery certification is an important expression of our farm's mission and our commitment to responsible community development.

If you would like to support the work of Friendship Farms and Fare and help us cover expenses related to the project, please feel free to share a contribution. Friendship Farms and Fare operates under the umbrella of Ecology Florida, a not for profit corporation, so your contributions are tax deductible.

**2014-2015 Renewal  
Seed Dealer License & Registration  
Friendship Farms & Fare  
S009451**

3 F is a licensed Seed Dealer. We just renewed our license with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, which issues these licenses that are required to sell seeds to the public. Through our friendship with Ecology Florida, we applied for the license as a subsidiary of Ecology Florida – a federally sanctioned Not For Profit organization. Want to buy some seeds? To explore the Ecology Florida project, see: <http://www.ecologyflorida.org/>

**The Florida Loquat Festival: Celebrating Florida's Urban Fruit  
April 5, 2014  
Market Off Main, New Port Richey**

<http://www.ecologyflorida.org/2014/03/florida-loquat-festival-celebrating-floridas-urban-fruit/>  
<http://tbo.com/Local/CommunityNews/festival-to-promote-little-known-loquat-tree-20140319/>

The first annual Florida Loquat Festival was a great success. Hundreds attended the festival. Fruit, trees, and preserves were sold or shared for donations. The educational program was well received. Folks are already looking forward to next year's festival.

**Friendship Farms and Fare Pursues Non-GMO and USDA Organic Certification**

As a matter of policy, Friendship Farms and Fare opposes the use of GMOs in food. We are exploring Non-GMO certification for our First Farm in New Port Richey, and possibly Tarry Lane Kitchens. We have the application in hand, and will be submitting it in the near future. Of course, we have never used GMO seeds or products containing GMOs, so you can rest assured that even without the certification, everything we share is free of GMOs.

We have also taken the initial steps to secure USDA Organic certification. The cost for USDA assessment (with no guarantee of approval) will be between \$950 and \$1300 depending on how much of the 3F project we desire to have assessed. As with our non-GMO commitment, we are fully committed to organic farming.

**Community Garden Project at New South Garden**

We are ready to receive applications for our community garden project. Folks interested in acquiring a plot can contact us through the 3F site.

Shareholders interested in acquiring a plot may participate for reduced rates.

We have installed sample community garden beds. Each is (108 sq feet) 12 x 9 or 18 x 6.

### **Farm and Fare Tours (Local Urban Gardens and Organic Kitchen)**

If you would like to schedule a tour local urban gardens in New Port Richey and/or the 3F Kitchen (Tarry Lane Tasting Station), please let us know, and we can make arrangements. Our tours are experiential, informational, educational, and fun. Donations are greatly appreciated.

Typically, and depending on the season, participants visit several urban farms, learn about organic farming in an urban environment using permaculture philosophies and practices, observe and learn about urban wildlife and helpful plants, enjoy samples of live produce, and share in the preparation of the vegan cuisine. Tours are structured on the basis of participants' interests and background. We can also arrange focused learning sessions at the Gardens and/or the Kitchens.

Please note that an appropriate contribution for the tours and learning sessions will be suggested when tours are scheduled.

There are four categories of tours:

- \* Urban Farming, Gardening and Soil development
- \* Urban wildlife and helpful plants (note if you desire a bat observation, which requires special scheduling)
- \* Vegan, Organic food preparation
- \* General (including two or more categories)

Please note that an appropriate contribution for the tours and learning sessions will be suggested when tours are scheduled.

### **3F: A Florida Friendly Farm**

The 3 F gardens are certified as a "Florida Friendly" environment – a certification we have held for over a decade.

Florida Friendly recognition is given to environments (typically residential yards) that support and enhance natural ecosystems. Certification is given in three categories (bronze, silver, and gold) based on a point system rating various features of the property and practices followed by the property owner. We received a high score but only a silver rating because of some changes in the program of which we were unaware.

Attention is given to features such as water-retention, native and drought tolerant plants, diversity in plant species, responsible irrigation systems, and amenities for native pollinators. Positive practices include minimal use of fertilizers (with organic preferred) and little or no use of poisons, groundcovers rather than turf, composting, and rainwater collection systems.

We encourage all our members and friends to pursue Florida Friendly designation for their properties. It is a wonderful way to learn more about Florida's natural ecology and what you can do to create a healthy environment right where you live. It is also a great way to go green.

Folks who wonder what they can do be more environmentally responsible are encouraged to review the Florida Friendly checklist. If you can change even one thing about your yard or your landscape practices to bring it into agreement with the guidelines, you will have made a difference. Even if you do not apply for the designation, reviewing the criteria will be an enriching educational

experience. Putting the guidelines into practice will make a definite difference. Here is the website for the program:

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## Other News and Reports

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### COMMERICAL PRODUCE REPORT

**Our Commercial Produce News Report is currently in repose. We will resume when time and talent allow. If anyone would like to volunteer to collect market prices, please let us know.**

### OTHER PRODUCTS FOR THE CSA FAMILY

**3F Produce for non-shareholders:** Non-Members may order shares for \$12 per week. For this nominal amount, contributors may request any items they desire from the weekly Share. Although we will assist with transmissions, it is the responsibility of the contributor to make arrangements for pick up of the share.

As always, non-CSA Members may request single items from the share list for \$5 per item. A full share for one week (any/all items) is \$12.

Just reply using the website contact link if you desire anything on the list. We suggest non-shareholders start an account to cover costs of items.

**EGGS.** Prices are \$6.50 a dozen (\$5.00 for shares), and \$4.00 a half-dozen (\$3.00 for shares). These prices are a bit higher than prices for organic eggs at commercial grocers. Acquiring eggs from a local farm (Suncoast Acres Poultry Farm) keeps resources in our community, supports local farming, and directly benefits a local farm family.

As required by our policies, our supplier is local, follows organic principles, practices compassionate husbandry, and allows chickens free range. If you would like to be included on the egg list, please start an account (\$20 suggested), and make requests accordingly. Eggs are from humanely treated chickens, and fed non-GMO feed.

**Honey:** Local West Pasco honey is available in 8 oz. bottles for \$7.00 (\$5.50 for shares).

**Seeds:** If you would like organic vegetable seeds for your garden, we will order them for you. Seed packs are \$4.00 each, 2 for \$7.00, and 5 for \$14.00. Just tell us what you'd like. Be sure to send your mailing address. No charge for shipping.

**Seedlings:** We are also happy to start plants for you. Just give us the word on the plants you want us to start, and we'll do the rest. Starter plants in cells are \$1.50 per plant (\$1, for shares), \$5.00 (\$4) for four, \$8.00 (\$7.00) for nine. When available, small plants are \$3.00 (\$2.40) each, and medium plants are \$5.00 (\$4).

**Let us know if you want to acquire seeds or starts for the Fall.**

**Trees:** Young Loquat trees are available in small (half-gallon) and medium (gallon) pots - \$10.00 (\$8.00 for shareholders). \$20 (\$18) for two-gallon pots. Larger trees in five-gallon pots are \$50 to \$70, depending on the size of the tree.

**Vermipost and Worms:** For folks interested in organic gardening, we have the best all-natural soil amenities you can find: Vermipost and Worms! Vermipost is compost that has been broken down and enriched by Red Worms. We also have the worms themselves. **Vermipost** is available in 32 oz containers for \$2.50 each (\$2.00 for shareholders), with discounts for orders of five or more. Vermipost containers will most likely have some worms in the mix. We recommend mixing the vermipost 1 to 1 with regular soil, and 1 to 3 or 4 with organic soil. Remember, if you use synthetic chemicals (such as fertilizers or pesticides), the vermipost will be compromised. Pesticides will kill the worms and synthetic fertilizers will kill the worms or drive them away.

**Worms** are available in 32 oz containers for \$7.50 (\$6 for shareholders). We cannot specify the exact number of worms in a container, but there should be 30-50. By the way, if you are developing an organic garden, always look for the OMRI seal of approval on fertilizers, soils, and insect deterrents.

**Seeds:** Shareholders are entitled to samples of seeds from our seed bank – three types of okra and our famous Calabrese broccoli. Our seeds are organic and derived from heirloom stock. They are listed with Seed Savers Exchange, and also available at the New Port Richey Library Seed Exchange. Let us know if you are interested – additional packages of seeds for \$4.00 (\$3.00) a packet (of 30). We cannot guarantee germination, but in our tests germination rates are close to 100%.

Heirloom, organic seeds from Seed Savers Exchange are \$4.00 each (\$3.00 for shares).

Florida Central West Coast acclimated Okra Seeds offered by 3F are: Silver Queen, Star of David, Red Burgundy, and Hill Country Red.

## **Local Markets and Growers' Sites Open to the Public Endorsed by Friendship Farms & Fare**

**Market Off Main:** We encourage members of the TBN G&G CSA to patronize the Market Off Main in New Port Richey, and other local produce markets. They often have organics, usually have local produce, are locally owned, and are now a distributor of Cow Pots. Here is their website: <http://www.marketoffmain.com/>

**Tasty Tuesdays:** Visit the New Port Richey Library Tuesday (10:00 AM – 12:00 noon) for a good selection of locally grown organic vegetables. [New Port Richey Public Library, 5939 Main St, New Port Richey, FL](#)

**Freedom House Farms:** Open to visitors on Saturday afternoons. Featuring freshly harvested produce available for purchase. 5642 Virginia Ave., New Port Richey

**First Farm:** Receptive to visitors on Sunday afternoons. Featuring seeds, seedlings, Loquat trees, and select produce in season. Call for appointment afternoons or evenings: (727) 849-1626. New Port Richey.

**To Return to our website,** go to: < <http://www.fffsite.org> >

## **Friendship Farms & Fare**

An Urban Farm Community, CSA, Seed Saver, Community Garden, and purveyor of seeds, seedlings, fruit trees, and organic cottage-industry foods.

## **Friendship Farms & Fare Community**

**Cadle's Cove Farm**

**Freedom House Farm**

**Friendship Farms & Fare: First Farm**

**Hart's Family Farm**

**Seeds of Love Organic Farm**

**Tarry Lane Tasting Station**

**October 6, 2014 – 1st report for the 2014-2015 Garden Year**

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